

Tourism project

Tourism project, Dominican Republic

“In the all-inclusive hotels, the souvenir vendors sell lots of products made in and imported from Asia. The prices of these souvenirs are very low. You can see a lot of wooden craft elephants displayed by the vendors. You can even imagine that some tourists would think there really are elephants in the Dominican Republic,” says a local seller.



Water vessels and pots made in the Dominican Republic



All-inclusive resorts

Beautiful sandy beaches, a rich cultural history and all-inclusive resorts: the tourism industry in the Dominican Republic is a booming business, continuing to develop at an extraordinary rate, and offering various opportunities for the local population to share the benefits of this success. Cordaid currently supports a Dominican organisation that trains craftsmen in production improvement and sales techniques in applied arts. Together with travel organisation TUI, possibilities are being sought for jointly providing local producers with loans to enable them to market their products and services. In this way, tourism can make a genuine contribution to the fight against poverty.

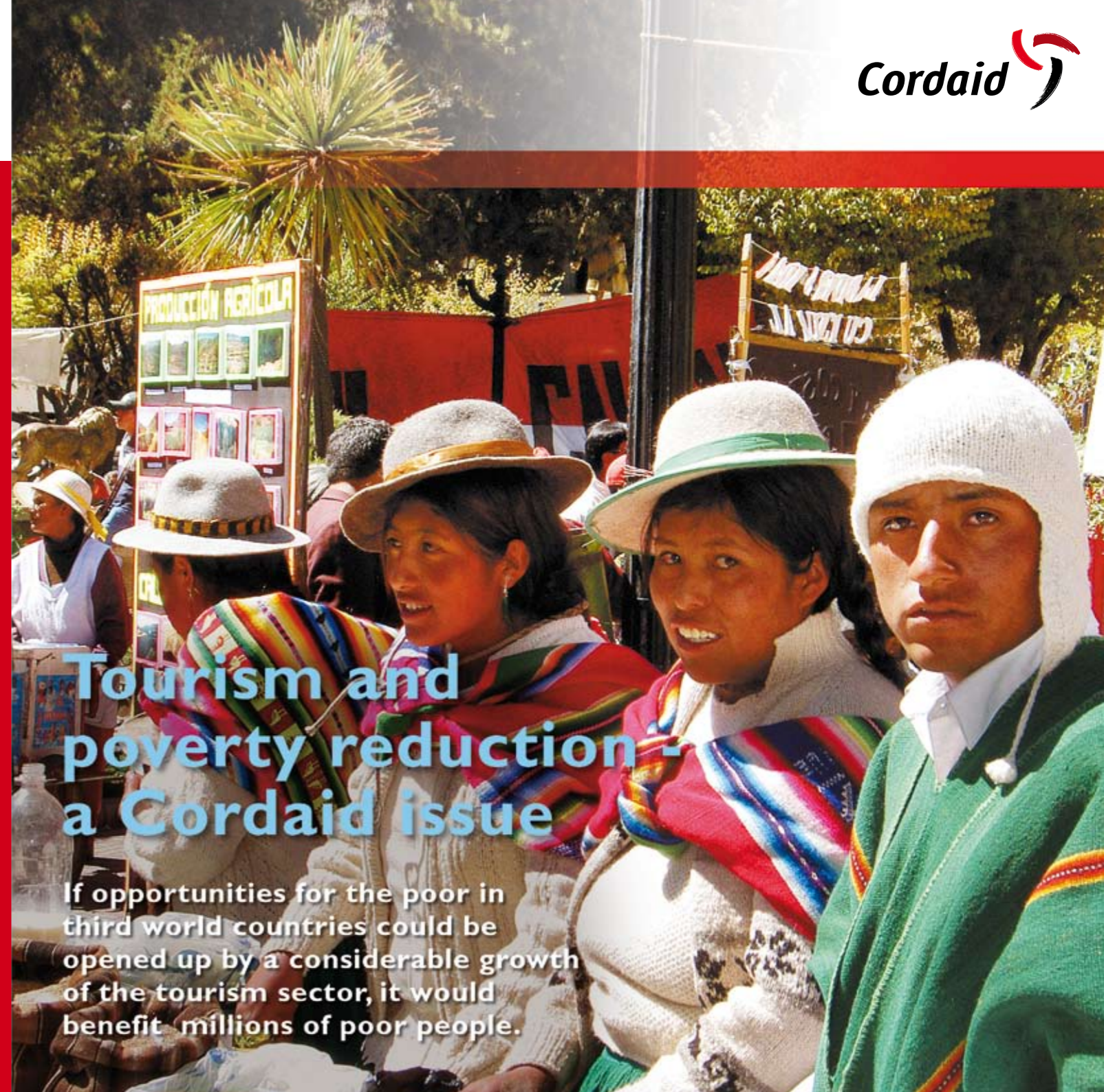
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Tourism and poverty reduction - a Cordaid issue

If opportunities for the poor in third world countries could be opened up by a considerable growth of the tourism sector, it would benefit millions of poor people.

This is Cordaid

Cordaid is one of the major organisations for development co-operation in the Netherlands, and is the driving force behind Memisa, Mensen in Nood, the Lenten Campaign and Kinderstem. We aim at achieving a structural reduction of poverty in over forty countries in Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Middle East, Eastern Europe and the Netherlands. We do this by supporting local organisations, because we believe in the strenght of people. In addition, we call on policy-makers to account for decisions which harm the poor. In our work, we are inspired by Catholic social thinking with the principle of the need for justice as our driving force. We do so with passion and a sharp eye for achieving results.

Cordaid and sustainable tourism

The tourism industry is playing an increasingly important role in global economy. 10% of the world economy is associated with the tourism sector. Developing countries are often very popular with tourists because of the comparative advantages these countries can offer. You might think that the poor local population benefit greatly from this growth of the tourism business. Unfortunately, reality is very different; more often, the effects of tourism are negative, such as environmental damage, destruction of nature, disappearance of local culture and sex tourism. Only when the local population can actually benefit from the tourism industry, we are able to take a step forward in the fight against poverty.

Cordaid approaches sustainable tourism from the point of view of the fight against poverty. We focus on the opportunities which the worldwide development of the tourist industry can provide. Cordaid supports local counterparts who, in turn, by providing credit funds and organizing training sessions, enable the poor to promote their local products and to strengthen their services and negotiating skills, in the expectation that they will be able to participate fully in the further development of the tourist industry in their countries, and that they will get the chance to improve their incomes and living conditions. Cordaid supports specific tourism projects which contribute to poverty reduction in Bolivia, Honduras and the Dominican Republic.

Hotel on coffee plantation, Bolivia



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“Tourism offers our whole village a future. Young people get trained in English, and learn how to work as guides. Women work as cooks in the campsite restaurant. We use the proceeds to install electricity, or build a village hall. In this way, everyone benefits from each tourist that visits our village,” says one of the villagers.

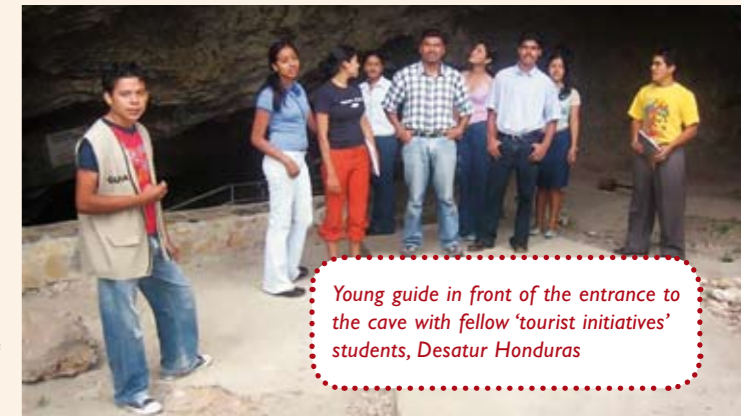
Small-scale community-based tourism in Bolivia has been booming over the last few years. Cordaid counterpart Probioma strives at promoting the sustainable use of natural resources. The local population living on the outskirts of the Amoro National Park in tropical Eastern Bolivia have developed simple holiday accommodations for tourists. The possibilities for tourists include camping, eating, making interesting excursions with local guides, and exchanging experiences with the locals. In this way the villagers earn an income. In the end the villagers should be able to manage these accommodations themselves.

Tourism project, Honduras

“After the hurricanes in Honduras, tourism in our country collapsed. We are now trying to rebuild this sector in such a way that our youth can benefit from the opportunities in this sector - all the while taking good care of the beautiful natural resources,” says a Honduran guide.

Tourism is an important national economic product in Honduras. The beautiful Lake Yojoa has a rich flora and fauna, boasting relics of pre-Colombian culture. A National Park is situated on either side (both north and south) of the lake. In Honduras, there is a high rate of youth unemployment. The opportunities for young people from

the countryside to get a job are minimal. Desatur, one of Cordaid’s counterparts in Honduras, trains young people to start up small businesses around Lake Yojoa, so that they are able set up a restaurant or a small hotel for the tourists, or work as guides in the National Park. In this way, Desatur improves job opportunities for young people from the countryside.



Young guide in front of the entrance to the cave with fellow 'tourist initiatives' students, Desatur Honduras



Community-based tourism in Bolivia